



# Youth Harm Reduction Program

## About the Program...

The Interior Health Youth Harm Reduction Team supports the people and systems that provide services to youth (under age 24) to incorporate harm reduction services and principals into their work.

This guide provides an overview of some of our services. Send us an email to connect! We would love to chat with you!



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## What is Harm Reduction?



Harm reduction is programs, policies and practices that aim to reduce the negative consequences from behaviors that are typically considered risky. It is also a way of being with people that is based in respect, compassion and inclusion.

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# Substance Use Education

We are available to consult with schools and youth service providers about evidence-based substance use education programs and resources. Here are a couple of our favourites!

LOVE  
THIS →

## Safety First: Real Drug Education for Teens

The **Safety First: Real Drug Education for Teens** is a up to date curricular aligned resource originally developed by the US Drug Policy Alliance (DPA) in 2017. The program provides teens with honest and scientifically accurate information, and empowers them to reduce drug-related harms. Safety First has since been adopted by the Department of Pediatrics at Stanford University's School of Medicine. In 2022, Interior Health's Youth Harm Reduction Program was given permission to adapt the program for use in British Columbia.

### Highlights

- 15 lessons containing slide decks, educator guide and student handouts.
- Relevant information for youth on BC/Canadian substance use topics like cannabis legalization, decriminalization as well as drug policy history.
- Learning objectives that align with BC's Physical Education Curricular Competencies for Social and Community Health and Well-being (Grade 9/10).

### The program will help students:

- Use critical thinking skills to access and evaluate information about alcohol and other drugs.
- Learn decision-making and goal-setting skills that support healthy and informed choices related to substance use.
- Develop personal and social strategies to manage the risks, benefits and harms of alcohol and other drug use.
- Understand the impact of drug policies on personal and community health.
- Learn how to advocate for restorative drug policies and practices.

Find out more about the program and access the materials in the [Safety First Educators Guide](#).



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# Substance Use Education

## Workbook: Safer Partying

Safer Partying is a workbook originally developed by youth for youth by the amazing people at [BYTE Empowering Youth](#) in Whitehorse, Yukon! They gave us permission to adapt it for use in Interior Health. It's full of cool activities that can be used individually or as a full program. It includes great activities such as:

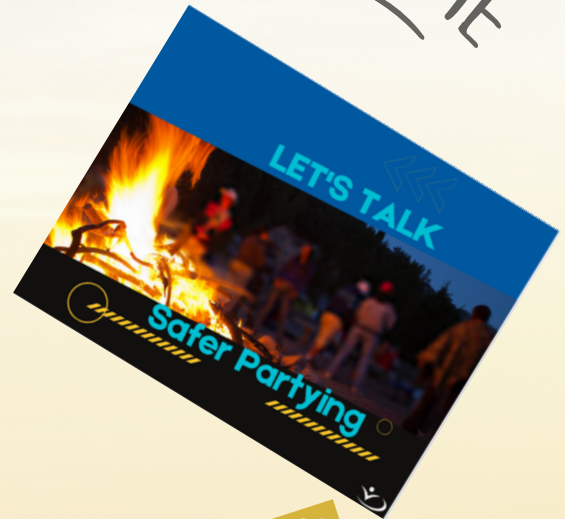
- Exploring values
- Identifying which substance matches the fact.
- What is a standard drink?
- Recognizing and responding to opioid overdoses
- "What would you do" scenarios
- Safer party planning
- Locating supports in your area

You can get a copy of the workbook on our [website](#).

## Looking for more education resources?

Check out our [Youth Harm Reduction Toolkit](#) for more recommended programs!

AWESOME



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# Opioid Overdose Response

## Naloxone Blue Kit Program for Schools

The [Naloxone Blue Kit program](#) is an Interior Health program to help schools prepare to respond to an opioid drug poisoning (overdose) on site. The program provides free naloxone kits to schools who complete training and implement an overdose response policy. **If you are not a school, no worries; get in touch with us about other programs!**



## Naloxone Training

Overdose response training teaches staff how recognize and respond to a possible opioid overdose using naloxone.

The training can be completed online or in-person and hands on. It takes about an hour to complete. This training can be combined with other workshops to meet the needs of staff.

## Overdose Response Policy Consultation



- *Where is your site's naloxone kit kept? Is it expired?*
- *Who is responsible for checking for and replacing expired kits?*
- *How often do staff receive training?*
- *What measures are in place to support those involved in an overdose response after the incident?*
- *Do staff know what post-incident reporting measures are required?*

These are a few reasons why schools and community agencies need an overdose response policy. Overdose response policies establish clear guidelines and procedures for responding to an overdose at or on school property.

Developing a policy doesn't have to be a lot of work. We have a [template](#) that can be adapted for use in your school/district or agency and we are always available to help!



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# Staff Training

PD day? Conference? Staff meeting? Our program works with community partners to offer interactive training on a variety of substance use and harm reduction topics. Training can be virtual or in person. These are a couple of our popular workshops - but we can always customize our sessions to meet your needs.

## Naloxone Training

Basic workshop on recognizing and responding to an opioid overdose.

- Overview of the toxic drug (overdose) crisis
- Prevalence of youth substance use
- Identifying an opioid overdose
- How to respond to an overdose using naloxone.



**LEARNING  
NEVER  
ENDS**



## Youth Harm Reduction 101

In depth training session (usually a half day but can be customized)

- What is harm reduction and why it works for youth who use substances?
- Youth substance use trends and influences
- Stigma and how it prevents youth from achieving wellness
- Harm reduction services
- Harm reduction and key legislation like consent and duty to report

## Recognizing and Responding to the Effects of Substances

Longer workshop that also looks at the effects of a variety of substances.

- Overview of different drugs, their effects & risks
- Responding to adverse effects of substances including alcohol, cannabis, and stimulants, psychedelics, and non-opioid depressants.
- Includes naloxone training



# Substance Use Policy Consultation

Is your site's substance use policy harmful or helpful?



Zero tolerance policies and abstinence-only education programs have limited effectiveness with youth and can perpetuate stigma, contribute to isolation, shame and reluctance to talk openly about substance use or seek help.

Better Together

We have a number of resources in our [Youth Harm Reduction Toolkit](#) to help sites create policies that build connectedness and foster social, emotional and cognitive competence. Reach out if you would like to connect about your policy.



## Harm Reduction Services

Youth who use substances and/or are sexually active deserve to be as safe possible. Our program is here to help improve youth access to harm reduction services and supplies including:

- Naloxone
- Safer sex supplies
- Safer substance use supplies
- Drug checking services
- Overdose prevention services



We are here to help your site get set up to provide harm reduction services to youth or connect you with community agencies and health care providers who can help youth get access.

And...we have some really cool condoms that we can provide for FREE! Speaking of condoms... check out this info on [how to make sure your condom distribution program is barrier-free](#) - pun intended... 😊

Let's talk about what your needs are.



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# SWAG

## We have swag!

Raise awareness and get the conversation going with our buttons and stickers! Great for prizes and events. We can provide limited quantities for FREE! (and help you order more if needed)!



Save  
T.W.E  
DATE

## Dates to Remember

**February (2nd week): Sexual and Reproductive Health Awareness Week** (usually same week as Valentines Day).

**Event idea:** bring in a local health care provider to talk about sexual health and resources in your community.

**April 14th - Anniversary of the declaration of BC's Toxic Drug (Overdose) Crisis**

**Event idea:** Put up a display to mark the number of lives lost in BC or your local area. Data can be found on the [BC Coroners website](#).

**August 31st - International Overdose Awareness Day**

**Event idea:** make purple ribbons available. Invite staff and students to do a pledge to end stigma.

These are just a few dates - there are many more [here](#).

BAM!

## Our Toolkit!

We have so much more to offer but we are running out of space :) Please check out our complete [Youth Harm Reduction Toolkit!](#)

Don't forget to bookmark it because we are always adding new stuff!

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